

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 21120 211751Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----117234 211807Z /50
O 211735Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4201
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO DA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 21120

EXDIS MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLES AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, MPOL, MARR, MASS, NATO, GW, US
SUBJECT: NEED TO INFORM GERMANS OF TANK GUN DECISION
BEFORE IT IS MADE PUBLIC

REFS: A) BONN 20894 DTG 191238Z DEC 77
B) BONN 15609 DTG 211735Z SEP 77

1. AS I AM SURE WASHINGTON IS AWARE, THE GERMANS ARE FOLLOWING WITH INTENSE INTEREST THE CURRENT COMPETITION BETWEEN THE US AND GERMAN TANK GUNS. THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT, PRESS AND PUBLIC WILL VIEW THE DECISION REACHED IN THIS CASE AS A MAJOR INDICATION OF THE FEASIBILITY OF JOINT WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT WITH THE US AND AS A KEY TEST OF US SINCERITY REGARDING THE "TWO-WAY STREET."

2. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY WILL REACH HIS DECISION VERY SOON AND BY MID-JANUARY AT THE
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LATEST, THAT THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILL DECIDE BY THE END OF JANUARY, AND THAT THE CONGRESS WILL TAKE A FINAL DECISION, PROBABLY IN FEBRUARY.

3. FOR THE OBVIOUS POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS, I CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT BE NOTIFIED OF EACH OF THESE DECISIONS BEFORE IT IS

ANNOUNCED - OR LEAKED - TO THE PUBLIC. I THEREFORE

HOPE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR THE EMBASSY TO
RECEIVE URGENT AUTHORIZATION TO PROVIDE SUCH ADVANCE
NOTIFICATION AT EACH OF THESE DECISIVE STAGES. SINCE
TIME MAY BE OF THE ESSENCE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT ALSO
PROVIDE SIMULTANEOUS NOTIFICATION TO THE GERMAN EMBASSY
IN WASHINGTON.

4. I WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT SECRETARY BROWN MIGHT WISH
TO CABLE A PERSONAL LETTER TO MINISTER LEBER REGARDING
THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DECISION, PARTICULARLY IF IT
GOES AGAINST THE GERMAN TANK GUN.
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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 21-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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